

Warning: appeasers at work

Not in many moons have we seen anything as ill-timed and maladroit as the statement recently ascribed to "high-ranking diplomats" at New York's UN headquarters. While UN negotiators at Kaesong were deadlocked with the Communists over the location of the cease-fire buffer zone, those grandstand quarterbacks were solemnly foretelling what the final settlement would be: a 10-20 mile buffer-zone with its southern boundary in the vicinity of the 38th parallel. These busybodies apparently believe that the UN should and will compromise. In return, the Communists would be expected to agree to a rigorous inspection system, which, it is implied, would be a major concession on their part. Statements like these are an unwarranted interference with the work of the UN negotiators and welcome encouragement to the Communists. General Ridgway cannot accept a buffer-zone anywhere except along the present defense line, which lies at some points 35 miles within North Korea, without serious consequences, both military and political. Why give up the only line that could be easily defended in case of suddenly renewed aggression? Why give the enemy grounds for claiming that the whole war had ended in stalemate? Why, finally, insult our South Korean allies, who demand unanimously that the line be consolidated where it is? To win future Communist "concessions"? They know already that General Ridgway will accept nothing less than a manifestly workable inspection system. They know, too, that no propaganda could justify their refusal to accept such a system. As for concessions, it will be time to consider them when the question of exchanging prisoners arises. Even though the Defense Department denies that the Communists are staging a "tremendous buildup" under cover of the negotiations, they are undoubtedly augmenting their armies every day. Perhaps General Ridgway should demand a deadline for final agreement. He should certainly demand acceptance of his terms.

"Americans cannot trust each other"

In his July 28 address as part of Detroit's 250th-anniversary celebration, President Truman attacked those who "are now saying that Americans cannot trust each other." Mr. Truman glossed over the *reason* for "suspicion between the people and their Government": the partial success of the Communist spy ring in its efforts to infiltrate the Federal Government. The Hiss-Wadleigh-Coplon and *Amerasia* evidence has naturally made people suspicious. Whatever influence Owen Lattimore had on the State Department—and the "suspicion" that it was considerable is hard to avoid—certainly favored the Communist line (AM. 4/15/50, pp. 35-36; 4/29/50, pp. 106-7; 5/6/50, pp. 129-30). Recent revelations in the course of hearings held by the Senate Internal Security subcommittee have caused uneasiness. Last February the subcommittee "raided" a barn in Lee, Massachusetts, owned by Edward C. Carter, former secretary-general of the Institute of Pacific Relations. The excursion yielded a letter Owen Lattimore

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wrote Mr. Carter in 1938 in which the Johns Hopkins professor said:

I think you are cagey in turning over so much of the China section of the enquiry [sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation] to Asiaticus, Hansung and Chi . . . For China, my hunch is that it will pay to keep behind the official Chinese Communist position . . . For the USSR—back their international policy in general, but without using their slogans and above all without giving them or anybody else an impression of "subservience."

On July 31 the subcommittee heard Alexandre Barmine, former Soviet military intelligence officer, author of *One Who Survived* and now head of the Russian desk of the Voice of America. He said that in 1933 the chief of Russian military intelligence had called Owen Lattimore and Joseph Barnes "our men." Mr. Barnes was then on IPR's staff. (The next year he joined the New York *Herald Tribune*, where, after serving as a high official in the Office of War Information, 1941-44, he became foreign editor, 1944-48. Mr. Barnes accompanied Wendell Willkie on his famous 1942 trip to Russia and China.)

. . . questionable associations

The Institute of Pacific Relations is not listed as a Communist front in the House Un-American Activities report of March 3, 1951. However, Pro-Soviet individuals seem to have infiltrated the organization. Besides Owen Lattimore and Joseph Barnes, who was notably pro-Russian as an editor, there was Frederick Vanderbilt Field, wealthy "angel" of pro-Soviet causes recently jailed for refusing to reveal the sources of the Civil Rights Congress' bail fund. He resigned as secretary of IPR's American branch in 1940 to head the American Peace Mobilization, listed by the UAAC as "subversive." He remained as a trustee of IPR, however, until 1947. Philip C. Jessup, present U. S. Ambassador at Large, as an officer of the Institute from 1939 to 1942, associated closely with Mr. Field. Although the latter's pro-Communist sympathies have not been disguised, Mr. Jessup either did not detect them or did not find them alarming. To say the least, this is not reassuring. Defense Secretary Marshall has been a trustee of IPR since April, 1949, although the Fourth Report of the California Un-American Activities Committee had already (1948) cast doubt on IPR by charging that, "while not completely controlled, [it] is dominated

by the Communist 'caucus.' This charge may be too strong; even if true, it may refer to the situation in IPR at one period and not at another. The California report, which is considered harsh, made it clear that "many sincere, non-Communist individuals" have joined such organizations, though it regarded them as "victimized." One must suspend judgment until all the facts are reported. Nevertheless, one wonders why Mr. Marshall identifies himself with any organization about which suspicions, at least concerning some individuals in a somewhat earlier period, have arisen.

Congress' unfinished work

Way behind in its work, the 82nd Congress struggled all last week with appropriation bills, not a single one of which has yet been sent to the White House. Of eleven regular money bills, only three have been approved in both House and Senate, and those three are bogged down in conference and will have to be voted on all over again. In 1949, passage of the final regular appropriation bill was delayed until October 29. Only the fact that this Congress seems determined to adjourn by October 1 keeps that record for procrastination safe. Nor are the money bills the only unfinished business before Congress. There is the little matter of a 1951 tax bill, which has been kicking around for months. After weeks of hearings the House voted last June to raise \$7.2 billion. The Senate still hasn't acted on the measure. When it does, it will make enough changes to assure a major rewrite job in conference. Then there is the Administration's \$8.5-billion bundle for foreign military and economic aid, which is not beyond the hearings stage in either house. All this is strictly "must" legislation. In addition, the Senate may find itself deeply involved in the St. Lawrence seaway issue. Tabled last week by the House Public Works Committee, the seaway may be introduced on the floor of the Senate as an amendment to the foreign-aid bill. That is the announced intention of Senators Moody (D., Mich.) and Aiken (R., Vt.), who want to give the representatives of the people a chance to vote on the issue. Then there is the hotly controversial Tidelands' Oil bill which Congress passed last year to nullify a Supreme Court decision, and which the President vetoed. If Congress really intends to get out of Washington by October 1, it has its work cut out for it.

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Prices decline

For the first time since the fighting started in Korea, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has been able to announce a decline in the cost of living. On July 25 it revealed that between May 15 and June 15 living costs for moderate-income urban families dropped one-tenth of one per cent. BLS also reported that its price index for spot commodity markets declined for the thirteenth consecutive week, and now stands only 23.1 per cent over pre-Korean levels. That is a drop of 15.3 per cent from the post-Korean high. To make the price picture complete, the BLS wholesale index fell 0.4 per cent in the week ending July 25. Meanwhile, according to the midyear report of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, the crop prospect for 1951 continues excellent. Unless the weather takes a very bad turn, our farmers will harvest more than a billion bushels of wheat and about 3.3 billion bushels of corn. Cotton acreage this year is 58 per cent over last year's abnormally small planting and will produce between 16 and 18 million bales. The beef cattle population is rising and by next January will hit a new record of 65.4 million head. Add to all this the heavy inventories of manufactured goods held on all levels from retailer to producer, and you have some of the reasons for the present lull on the price front. You also have one explanation for the refusal of Congress to pass a stiff controls bill. Inventories can melt rapidly, however, as businessmen discovered a year ago; and when consumers have plenty of folding money to spend, the demand for meat, especially for beef, quickly exceeds even the most ample supply. That is why most observers are convinced that prices will shortly rise again even before the full impact of defense spending exerts its inflationary pressure.

The U. S. in the UN—1950

One has only to leaf through the 432-page report by the President to the Congress for the year 1950 on *United States Participation in the United Nations* (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., \$1) to understand why it was seven months in preparation. Over a hundred members of the U. S. Mission to the United Nations took part in literally thousands of meetings and conferences during 1950. It must have been a monumental task to collate all their reports. Then there was the delicate editorial job of putting the best face possible on what was not exactly a brilliant performance by our delegation in the Security Council and General Assembly, whatever may be said of the record of our representatives in the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies. The book abounds in claims that "the U. S. took the initiative" in this or that matter, but except for the laudable "Uniting for Peace Resolution" there is little to show, even after the editorial highlighting, that our delegation adequately exemplified the leadership which the U. S. is supposed to enjoy in the world. How much this was due to the preoccupation of the higher State Department officials with the various crises that convulsed the year 1950, which forced them to leave too many policy decisions

to the Department's Bureau of United Nations Affairs, and how much it was due to lack of trained talent is a matter for conjecture. If the former is the case, perhaps it would help if the delegation were permitted easy access to the geographical desks of the Department, instead of being insulated from them by what some consider the excessively bureaucratic Bureau of United Nations Affairs. If talent is in short supply, Secretary Acheson might consider assigning to the delegation the half-dozen or so career diplomats who are in the process of being eased out of the Department for reasons unknown to them.

Toward a European army

When the idea of a European army was suggested to the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization last fall, it was welcomed at once by the United States. West German troops were sorely needed to fill up the ranks of the Eisenhower army. The French would agree more readily to their inclusion if they were first merged in a continental army. Washington, favoring European integration in every form possible, made only one stipulation. The formation of an integrated European defense force must not delay the assignment of troops to General Eisenhower's command. On July 24, after months of deliberation, the Paris Conference on a European Army submitted its recommendations. The technical experts of France, Western Germany, Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg "agreed in principle" on a supranational army, under a unified command, wearing the same uniforms, using standardized equipment and financed by a joint defense fund. Broadly speaking, what they proposed is the military counterpart of the Schuman plan for merging West European coal and steel industries. In fact, the same parliamentary assembly, minus the Netherlands, would function for both organizations. Already the European-army scheme is being called another example of "federation by vertical categories." It should be welcomed by all who believe that Europe must unite in order to survive. But the experts are already asking if its formation will not delay the assignment of troops to General Eisenhower. Volney D. Hurd cabled from Paris on July 25 to the *Christian Science Monitor*:

The best guess for the date at which a European army would be at General Eisenhower's disposal would be the summer of 1954—perhaps even 1955.

On the other hand, Defense Secretary Marshall told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 27 that *by the end of 1952* the Europeans themselves will have 2.5 million men in the field. Either Mr. Hurd or General Marshall is wrong. We hope it is Mr. Hurd.

New Italian cabinet

When the Italian Prime Minister, Alcide de Gasperi, submitted his resignation to President Luigi Einaudi on July 16, it was certain 1) that Signor Einaudi would be obliged to turn to the Christian Democrats again, and 2) that among the Christian Democrats he would have to designate Signor de Gasperi to succeed him-

self, as he did on July 19. Such is the preponderance of the Christian Democrats in Parliament, and such is the pre-eminence of Signor de Gasperi in his own party. In fact, the Prime Minister's resignation and reappointment appear to have had no other significance than to serve as a warning to his quarreling followers that without discipline and a spirit of compromise no party can hope to survive. It was a warning to his conservative supporters to be more yielding on the matter of land reform and on social questions generally. It was a warning to the liberal wing of the party to be somewhat less impetuous in pushing for social and economic advance. The specific issue which led to the Cabinet's resignation—the Government's deflationary policy—will be compromised only slightly, if at all. Signor de Gasperi has made the lira one of the strongest currencies in Europe, but in so doing he has put a brake on investment. This has led to great dissatisfaction among the social reformers in the party—and to some dissatisfaction among U. S. Marshall Plan representatives—who attribute part of the blame for two million unemployed to the relatively low rate of investment. A little inflation, they argue, would encourage investment and stimulate economic activity generally. That is true, but it is likewise true, as de Gasperi points out, that inflation would cut the real wages of employed workers and invite the Communists to stir up fresh mischief. The Prime Minister will continue to make progress slowly. His liberal supporters, though still dissatisfied, will fall into line.

Army ends segregation in Korea

The announcement by the Army on July 26 that it was abandoning racial segregation of the troops in its Far East command has a twofold significance. It means the disbanding of the Army's last Negro regiment—the Twenty-Fourth Infantry Regiment, first organized at Fort McKavitt, Texas, in 1869. The men of the Twenty-Fourth will view the disbanding of their unit with less sorrow since it is a move toward a goal that all our Negro servicemen have long hoped to see achieved. This is the second meaning of the July 26 announcement. It is a major step toward the full implementation of the President's Executive Order 9981, issued July 26, 1948, which called for "equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." The report of a Presidential Committee on equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, handed to the President on May 22, 1950, showed that while notable progress in integrating Negroes into the forces had been achieved by the Air Force, and to a less extent by the Navy, the Army tended to lag somewhat behind. One reason for this may have been that the Navy and Air Force, unlike the Army, depend much more on volunteers than on a general draft, and so can choose their personnel. But the Army, it is now clear, does not intend to be long left behind.

Correction: The proper title of Justice Desmond (AM. 8/4, p. 433) is Judge of the N. Y. Court of Appeals.

WASHINGTON FRONT

It is a paradox that in a slow-moving Congress which after seven months still has its biggest tasks ahead, there are scores of Congressmen so overworked that they cannot find enough hours in the day to meet all the demands of their job. A good case could be made for the proposition that there never have been so many hard-working Senate and House members as there are today.

Some attention has been given recently to the so-called Tuesday-to-Thursday Club—Congressmen who live in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey or other nearby States and check into Washington just three days a week for a soft touch on the voters and the U. S. Treasury. There are some members who do this. Often they live in districts so overwhelmingly Democratic or Republican that, once elected, they're in for life if they play ball with their political organizations.

But for every one of these there is at least one other Congressman who often works a twelve-hour day, can't possibly get to all the committee meetings he is supposed to attend and rarely catches up with the bale of mail that lands on his desk every morning. Congress is like any other group of 500 men—there are hard workers and there are drones. In a land where it always is open season on public officials, especially those subject to nation-wide lampooning, all are tarred alike.

Time was when Congress came to town for only a few months each year, passed the regular Government housekeeping appropriation bills, tinkered with the tariff, made some speeches and went home. But for fifteen years now a congressman's job, if he has worked at it, has been very close to a full-time proposition. Even in election years it sometimes has been tough for members to get home for fence-mending, and Congressmen have been defeated because they stayed on the job in Washington instead of turning to campaigning.

This session certainly has not been notable for its accomplishments, and yet anyone who watched House Ways and Means Committee members wade through week after week of hearings on the new tax bill knows these members earned their pay. The Senate Finance Committee now must go through the same tedious routine. The economic controls bill made a lot of people unhappy, but Banking and Currency Committee members on both Senate and House sides were bogged in weeks of hearings in its processing. The lengthy MacArthur hearings made heavy demands on Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committee members. Appropriations Committees members always have an arduous job.

Sure, Congress has moved slowly and clumsily. True, members ask for the jobs—they keep trying to get re-elected all the time. But your Congressmen aren't all misfits, poltroons and blackguards, by a jugful.

CHARLES LUCEY

UNDERSCORINGS

The August issue of the *Catholic Mind* carries the full text of Pope Pius XII's May 5 address to diocesan presidents of Italian Catholic Action and members of the Marian Congregations of Rome and Italy. His Holiness distinguished Catholic Action, which he described as "a sort of reception center for active Catholics always ready to collaborate in the apostolate of the Church," from "other Catholic associations . . . usually geared toward a special, determined object . . ." In discussing Marian Congregations (*i.e.*, the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary), the Holy Father referred to the papal constitution *Bis Saeculari*, issued Sept. 27, 1948, in which the Sodality was officially declared to be a form of Catholic Action.

► Fr. Harold C. Gardiner, *AMERICA's* Literary Editor, John G. Brunini, executive secretary of the Catholic Poetry Society and editor of *Spirit*, and Prof. Francis Connolly of the English Department, Fordham University, will appear Aug. 14 on the Georgetown University Forum, which is carried by the Dumont television network on Tuesday evenings, 8 to 8:30 EST. The theme of the forum will be "Religious Trends in Current Books." The program originates in New York (Channel 5) and can be seen also in Washington, D. C., Ames, Iowa and Rock Island, Ill.

► Terence Quirk, a leading authority on educational legislation in Great Britain, who contributed the chapter on British educational laws to the America Press booklet *The Right to Educate*, has published an 84-page book, *The Education Acts, 1944, 1946, 1948 and The Voluntary Schools*. Based on articles he wrote for the *Universe* (London) 1948-50, with much additional matter, it covers every phase of British educational law. The book may be obtained from the author, 23 Trinity Road, Hoylake, Cheshire, England (four shillings).

► Rev. Joseph C. Husslein, S.J., associate editor of *AMERICA* from 1911 to 1927, will complete his sixtieth year as a Jesuit on Aug. 14. Author or co-author of a baker's dozen of books on the Christian social apostolate, Fr. Husslein was the originator in 1931 of the monumental *Science and Culture Series*, published by Bruce, Milwaukee. The late Aodh de Blacam, one of Ireland's foremost literary critics, called this series, which now totals almost 200 volumes, "a really trustworthy example of American culture—of American scholarship, deep and sound." *Ad multos annos!*

► *Cardinal Newman*, by J. Lewis May, first published in 1930 and out of print in this country for some time, has been reprinted by the Newman Press, Westminster, Md. . . . *The Toddler and Sex: Points for Parents of the Pre-School Child* is a ten-cent pamphlet prepared by the Barclay Street Institute of Catholic Action and published by the Paulist Press, 401 W. 59th St., New York 19, N. Y. C. K.

Weak defense bill

About the best that can be said of the 1951 Defense Production Act is that it could have been worse. For a time it appeared that Congress might send a bill to the White House which would positively invite inflation. The new law, while weaker than the one it replaces, will at least enable the Administration to fight a rear-guard action against further price rises and, with luck, slow them down to a trot.

So far as we can see now, the chief weaknesses in the law are these:

1. It prohibits the rollbacks of beef prices scheduled for August and October.
2. It continues to give the green light to farm prices.
3. It renders extremely difficult the job of rolling back prices of manufactured goods which have gotten out of line, or even of keeping industrial prices at their present level.
4. It denies authority to maintain slaughtering quotas, without which OPS will find it difficult to halt black markets in meat.
5. It does not permit the Administration to control commercial rents.
6. It weakens the Federal Reserve Board's tight controls over installment buying.
7. It leaves the control agencies inadequately equipped to enforce their regulations.
8. It denies to the Administration power to curb speculation in the commodity markets.

Some of the Congressmen responsible for this flabby bill have argued that indirect controls (taxes, savings, credit controls) are a much more effective answer to inflation than direct controls (ceilings on wages and prices). The sincerity of this argument may be judged by the reaction of these same gentlemen to the President's request for an additional \$10 billion in taxes and to the Federal Reserve Board's recent plea that Congress do nothing to weaken its curbs over consumer credit. In the new defense bill, they gravely undermined FRB's controls over installment buying of automobiles and other durables, and now they are talking of giving the President not much more than half the taxes he wants. Yet they profess to be staunch proponents of "indirect" controls.

The fact is that the Southern Democrat-Republican coalition is gambling that present consumer apathy to the threat of inflation will endure until after the next election. Meanwhile they have earned the gratitude and support of almost all the major pressure groups in the country. Politically, the gamble may pay off. If it does not, however, if prices, following the present lull, blow upward again, the coalition will have badly served the nation's welfare.

In this connection, a passage from the June 3 pastoral of the Spanish Archbishops is very apropos. Describing the duty of the State to assure the basic needs of the masses in a period of inflation, they write:

In normal times prices are regulated by market transactions. However, in periods of production

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shortages, inflation and high living costs, a legal ceiling price is advisable which assures the producer a fair profit but, at the same time, prevents any abuses by his taking advantage of shortages to extort prices which are higher than the just maximum and which make goods inaccessible to the masses.

To the extent that the new law does not permit the Administration to fix and hold fair prices, Congress has failed in its duty to the country. It has violated that justice which dictates that the burdens of society be equitably apportioned, and which moralists call "distributive." In these days when a Senate subcommittee is studying the problem of morality, as distinguished from legality, in government, this ethical observation may be of some interest.

Patriarchs use religion as "the opiate"

On July 23 a novel "appeal to Christians of the whole world" was issued from Moscow. Its authors were the Orthodox Patriarchs of "Moscow and all the Russias," of "Antioch and all the East," of Georgia and Rumania, and the President of the Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. They had been called to "the Third Rome" to agree upon the text of the appeal.

As monitored by the Voice of America, it is self-termed "a fiery message to multiply our efforts in the cause of defending peace throughout the world and by the daily fulfillment of duty, faith, conscience, love and reason to make impossible the invasion of the hell of a new world war into our life." The document, by simulating a high moral tone and invoking the authority of Holy Scripture, makes an impressive piece of religious propaganda, clearly designed to portray Russia and her satellites as the champions of world peace.

The real purpose of this otherwise persuasive appeal crops out in several ill-disguised political passages. That the authors are acting as tools of Soviet imperialism becomes unmistakably manifest when, deserting Scripture, they parrot the line of Vishinsky and Malik to the effect that "the aggressive states headed by the United States are arming, condemning people to calamities, poverty in the present and total destruction in the future." Denouncing "the dark designs of the enemies of peace," the Soviet hierarchs praise the signers of the Communist-sponsored Stockholm Peace Appeal, who are "thus helping humanity [to] arrest the criminal hand of aggressors and to prevent the atom bomb being used in Korea."

The dissimulation and bitter hate behind the apparently pious pleading draws its inspiration from the Kremlin. The authors lay great emphasis on the solemn counsel of St. James: "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace" (James 3:18). Just as the Kremlin itself "interprets" history and the texts of political agreements to suit its imperialistic purposes, so have these men, wearing the vestments of ecclesiastics but chanting the litany of Stalinism, brazenly torn a verse of the Apostle from the context of his message. The reader who looks up this verse in St. James will find in the lines immediately preceding a condemnation of efforts of Marxists to foment hatred between classes and between peoples:

This is not the wisdom that descends from above. It is earthly . . . devilish. For where there is envy and contentiousness, there is instability and every wicked deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, moderate, docile, in harmony with all good things, full of mercy and good fruits, without judging, without dissimulation (vv. 15-17).

What reception will this pseudo-Christian peace-appeal find among the followers of Christ on both sides of the Iron Curtain? Perhaps even in the satellite states they will say: "By their fruits you will know them" (Matt. 6:20). Peoples engulfed by Soviet armies of occupation, peoples who know at first hand the tyrannies of Soviet persecution, will say: "All those who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matt. 26:52).

The fruits of Soviet "peace-mongering" are clear for all to see. When the West disarmed in 1945-46, did Russia? When the United States, through the Marshall Plan, "turned its swords into ploughshares," did not Russia "set brother against brother" in a frenzied effort to prevent the restoration of a stable, peaceful Europe? When the United States proposed to the United Nations a generous, self-denying method of closing the gates of the "hell" of the atom bomb, did not Russia turn down the offer because it involved inspection of her war factories? Even today, after Russia-inspired aggression in Greece, in Malaya, in Indo-China and in Korea, after all the world has come to know of the menacing build-up of armed might in Russia and her satellites, are not the nations of the West reluctant to desert the ways of peace for the rigors of rearmament? Such nations are no threat to world peace.

The door to peace is open. The way to peace is disarmament. When the hierarchs can quote reductions in Russian and satellite armies, they may be able to persuade Christians that Russia's aims are peaceful. Until then we will be guided by Our Lord's warning: "When the strong man, fully armed, guards his courtyard, his property is undisturbed" (Luke 11:21).

Karl Marx charged that capitalists used religion as "the opiate of the people" to insure them to their proletarian bondage. Stalin goes further: he shamelessly employs the highest ecclesiastics in his power to screen his ruthless imperialism behind a deceptive Christian appeal for peace.

142 days to Christmas

The heat and humidity of these clammy, sticky, stuffy August days make the nipping and eager air of Christmas seem like a far-off, fantastic dream. Yet, even at the risk of emphasizing our present discomfort, we should be turning our thoughts to that season.

In our issue for March 24 of this year, Auleen Bordeaux Eberhardt's article "282 days to Christmas" sounded a warning about the necessity of getting down to work early if we want a Christlike Christmas.

Mrs. Eberhardt had two main preoccupations: the restoration of the Christ-Child and Christian symbolism to our Christmas cards; and the promotion of public religious Christmas celebrations by cities and municipalities. Both are old themes with this author, who not only writes about them, but goes to work to get action.

Between November 25 and December 30 of last year our "Underscorings" column was able to publish the names of fourteen U. S. and Canadian cities which had public religious celebrations or public Christmas cribs. On January 6 the column reported favorably on the Christmas shows carried on radio and TV.

What all this adds up to is that it is possible to get a Christian celebration of Christmas, if enough people are actively interested.

Now, while the opening sentences of this editorial may have something of a wry smile, there is a very serious fact underlying them. Many people are even now, in the August heat, working hard to get ready for next Christmas. The cards that blossom forth suddenly in the stationery shops and five-and-tens once the Thanksgiving Pilgrims and turkeys are gone were not made in November or even in October. Most of them are already made. Merchants are making up Christmas inventories and planning decorations. Movie houses are buying their Christmas "shorts." Everybody who has an eye on the family dollar is busy getting ready for Christmas.

And what about those who have an eye, not on the family dollar, but on the Family in whose honor we celebrate Christmas? One hundred and forty of Mrs. Eberhardt's 282 days have already passed. The remaining 142 days will be little enough time for the work that has to be done if Christmas of 1951 is to be a truly Christian feast.

This means organization, and work. We have no lack of Catholic organizations—parochial, diocesan, national. Many non-Catholic groups are quite ready to join in the work. Work, therefore, is the thing required. Civic authorities, merchants, service clubs, schools, movie theatres, fraternal organizations—all these have to be approached, convinced, persuaded to play their part in rescuing Christmas from modern paganism.

The secularizing and commercializing of Christmas is something like the weather: everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it. Nobody? Well, hardly anybody. Those are fighting words. It would be wonderful to see some of our great Catholic organizations getting into the fight.

Organized crime and political corruption

Vincent S. Kearney

THE MAN WHO PLACES a small bet with a street-corner bookie can well be the initial link in a chain of corruption which oftentimes leads up to the highest echelons of government. This is a strong statement but it is the only logical conclusion to be drawn from the recent findings of the Senate committee investigating organized crime in the United States. The corruption of the politician and the law-enforcement officer, which has its origin in the fantastic profits the racketeer reaps from illegal gambling, is widespread throughout the nation. The Senate Crime Investigation Committee found this to be true not only of the more populous urban centers but also of the rural areas.

THE SOUTH: OUTSIDE THE CITIES

Rev. Jerome A. Drolet is the zealous pastor of St. Charles Church in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Thibodaux is located in LaFourche Parish (i.e., county), some sixty miles southwest of New Orleans and presumably far removed from the recognized criminal centers in the United States. When Father Drolet took up his priestly duties in the bayou country of Louisiana, he probably never dreamed that he would one day be caught up in the web of organized crime spun from a loom as far distant as Chicago, his own home town. Father Drolet's connection with the criminal syndicate, of course, is strictly from the outside looking in. He has been in the forefront of a citizens' effort to clean up Thibodaux and the surrounding parish. The undaunted priest has paid bitterly for his zeal.

Father Drolet is executive secretary of the LaFourche Social Action Committee, an organization aiming at the religious, moral and economic betterment of the community. It was not long before both he and the members of his committee discovered that the one big obstacle to their efforts was organized and *protected* crime.

As he testified in the Senate committee's hearings in New York, gambling was widespread throughout LaFourche Parish. The only public buildings which did not contain slot machines were the churches and schools. The gambling casino, commercialized prostitution and white slavery, which could be traced to the Capone mob in Chicago, were tearing down everything that Father Drolet and his civic committee had succeeded in building up. The good priest protested to local authorities, but to no avail.

Father Drolet received no cooperation either from the sheriff, the district attorney or the lesser lights of public officialdom. He then tackled what was regarded as the behind-the-scenes power. But this strategy

In this article Fr. Kearney completes the study of the findings of the Senate crime-investigating committee which he began May 19 with his article "Organized crime: the real evil." Here he deals with the most sinister aspect of the crime picture in the United States—the relations of organized crime with politicians, judges and law-enforcement officers, a relationship subversive of the very purpose of government.

backfired. A campaign was at once begun to cause a split between Father Drolet's ardent supporter, Archbishop Rummel of New Orleans, and his priests, between the priests themselves and between the priests and the people. Father Drolet began receiving anonymous telephone calls and threats. "The latest one—I don't believe it completely—but the latest one which they have spread among our good people is that I am to be killed. People seem to believe it rather widely."

Father Drolet was finally dragged into court for a public hearing of his charges of corruption among officials. The summons was served by a deputy sheriff, Eddie St. Marie. According to the priest's testimony, the district attorney tried to trap Father Drolet into mentioning the name of Harvey Peltier Sr. The priest would thus have laid himself open to a libel suit "disastrous in local and State courts."

Though the court pretended to be interested in a serious investigation of organized crime in LaFourche Parish, Father Drolet was the only witness called. A petition of the priest's attorney, James J. Cain, to summon ten witnesses to testify to prostitution and slot machines in the parish was turned down. "It is the conclusion of the court," announced Judge J. Louis Watkins, "that there is no further need of the conduct of this meeting since no disclosures are forthcoming." Father Drolet and his enterprising committee had run up against a combination impossible to beat—organized crime which relied upon police and political protection.

LaFourche is but one of several Louisiana parishes where identical conditions have prevailed. In fact, as Mayor DeLesseps S. Morrison of New Orleans testified before the crime committee, the whole State presents a complete case history of how national gambling and racketeering elements have succeeded in aligning themselves with the local small-time hoodlum. What is most shocking, as the crime committee points out in its Third Interim Report, is this:

Their operations depended in large measure on the negligence, the active support or the participation of some local law-enforcement officials, who in large measure could nullify the efforts of diligent officials and public-spirited citizens in their own or nearby jurisdictions.

The crime problem in Louisiana, Mayor Morrison pointed out, stemmed from Huey Long's welcome to slot-machine king Frank Costello after Mayor Fiorello La Guardia had banished the one-arm bandits from New York City. From 1936 to 1946 a transplanted New Yorker, Phil Kastel, and his distant partners, Costello and Jake Lansky, in cooperation with narcotics-vendor

Carlos Marcello, reaped profits running into the millions from the Louisiana operations. When Morrison became Mayor of New Orleans in 1946 Costello and Kastel shifted their operations to the parishes adjoining the city.

While it was conducting hearings in New Orleans the crime committee heard the testimony of the sheriffs of four parishes and two incorporated towns. Each one of them stated that he knew of the presence of slot machines, handbooks, gambling and, in some cases, prostitution. None would admit that he had first-hand knowledge of such violations.

The story was pretty much the same wherever the crime committee conducted its hearings. It had to be. As Father Drolet very pointedly remarked during the course of his public hearing:

The notorious headquarters of white slavery and prostitution operated in this parish over a long period of time without any interference. Such a condition never exists anywhere unless a "fix" is put on law-enforcement agencies, whoever they may be.

No hoodlum is going to sink vast sums of money into the operation of a gambling casino, for example, unless he is sure the place will operate. In the long run it is only the law-enforcement agent who can assure the racketeer that his investment is safe.

In Florida, Sheriff Walter Clark of Broward County admitted that gambling places operated in his area, though he conducted raids only on specific complaint. Former Police Chief Short admitted that he once said he would have nothing to do with the suppression of gambling. In Dade County, Sheriff Jimmie Sullivan had a hard time explaining how his net worth could increase in five years from \$2,500 to well over \$70,000 on a salary averaging \$10,000 a year. Oddly enough, Mr. Sullivan disclaimed having any responsibility for the suppression of gambling, though it is illegal. The Sheriff was first suspended by Governor Fuller Warren and then reinstated—to the complete chagrin of the crime committee. He finally resigned in June.

KANSAS CITY AND TAMPA

There is no concrete proof that Charles Binaggio, big-time Kansas City gambler, whose violent murder in April, 1950 is still unsolved, ever received a guarantee of protection from Governor Forrest Smith of Missouri. Still the Governor had Binaggio's support in his campaign, financial and otherwise. As the committee pointed out in its report, it is "inconceivable" that Governor Smith could not have realized that Binaggio was angling for a *quid pro quo*.

Binaggio took direct means to insure protection for the Kansas City gambling element. He sought to con-

trol the police force from the very top. If he failed, it was no fault of his. Enough facts are available to give rise to the suspicion that it was no fault of Governor Smith's, either.

The Governor actually appointed two police commissioners in Kansas City who were on Binaggio's approved list. What checkmated Binaggio's strategy was that two holdover appointees, R. Robert Cohn, a Republican and Hampton Chambers, a Pendergast Democrat who had not supported Smith for Governor, were determined neither to be influenced by Binaggio nor

to resign. It is significant that Mr. Cohn was called to the State capitol after Binaggio had predicted that the Governor would send for him. Though the Governor did not try to pressure Mr. Cohn into resigning on this occasion, neither did he take any action on the latter's information that Binaggio was trying to bribe the two recalcitrant members of the State police commission into "going along" with the gamblers. Mr. Cohn testified that at his last meeting with the gangsters, in June, 1949, Binaggio remarked: "The boys are behind in their

schedule and are making it hot for me." His failure to open up Kansas City, owing to the courage of two of the police commissioners and others, may have been the reason he was murdered.

Tampa, Florida, has had a remarkable record of a dozen racket killings and six attempted assassinations in less than two decades. From January to September, 1950, there were only 96 arrests for gambling in the wide-open city. Forty-five of these forfeited bail and the charges against 43 were dismissed. Only 6 defendants paid a fine. Two cases are still pending.

Much of Tampa's violence is due to the fact that the police have failed to enforce the gambling laws. The crime committee proved conclusively that the gambling laws were not enforced because the racketeers were lavish with their protection money.

Sheriff Hugh L. Culbreath, State Attorney J. Rex Farrior and former Police Chief J. L. Eddings vied with one another in their attempts to confuse the committee. Mr. Culbreath, like his Dade County colleague, Jimmie Sullivan, could not explain the growth of his net worth from \$30,000 to \$100,000 during his years of office. He failed, both at Tampa and during a subsequent appearance in Washington, to refute accusations of graft. Mr. Farrior resorted to double-talk, attempting to shift the blame for his shortcomings onto others.

POLITICAL CORRUPTION IN NEW YORK

Public opinion was already aroused when the Kefauver committee brought the big show to New York, headquarters of the national crime syndicate of which Frank Costello was reputed to be the head. A Brooklyn



grand jury was then weighing the evidence of a vast bookmaking empire doing a \$20-million annual business. Miles McDonald, District Attorney of Kings County, and his able assistants were digging up plenty for the grand jury to work on. Across the East River District Attorney Frank Hogan of New York County was unearthing evidence of the misuse of the funds of the Uniformed Firemen's Association, (with obvious political implications) running into six figures, the fixing of basketball games and the vicious narcotics traffic. None of these illegal operations, obviously, could be carried on so extensively without police protection.

Mr. McDonald and his assistant, Julius A. Helfand, outlined for the Senate committee the extent of gambling and the inevitable corruption of New York's police. On the basis of the number of scratch sheets sold in the city, Mr. Helfand estimated that a total of at least \$300 million a year was bet with bookmakers alone. This, he added, was an extremely conservative estimate, since Harry Gross, the biggest gambler on whose operations the Brooklyn grand jury had detailed evidence, worked on a \$20-million-a-year scale himself. Besides bookmaking, the professionals bet fantastic sums on lay-off bets, i.e., bets made in interstate commerce between bookmakers themselves. Mr. McDonald asserted that "no large-scale gambling operations could be conducted without the knowledge and consent of at least that segment of the police department charged with the enforcement of the gambling laws." The estimated sum of \$250,000 weekly paid out in police protection, he added, was no exaggeration.

Most of the subject matter of the New York hearings revolved around the testimony of William O'Dwyer, former Mayor and now Ambassador to Mexico, and Frank Costello, reputed king of the underworld.

On Mr. O'Dwyer the committee issued a scathing report. Though, as Brooklyn prosecutor, the one-time Mayor broke up Murder, Inc., he never touched the combine's big bosses, identified by the committee as Joe Adonis, "Bugsy" Siegel, Jake Lansky, "Longie" Zwillman, Willie Moretti and "Lucky" Luciano. Mr. O'Dwyer found various pretexts, the committee reported, for not prosecuting Albert Anastasia, the waterfront racketeer, until the chief witness against him, Abe Reles, had mysteriously "fallen" out of a hotel window while under protective custody. Though he constantly denounced Tammany Hall and Frank Costello during his term of office, the former Mayor admitted that he had gone to Costello "for aid in uncovering war-contracts frauds" and that he had once met Michael J. Kennedy, then Tammany leader, at Costello's home.

During the course of his testimony before the Senate committee, Mr. O'Dwyer agreed that bookmaking could not exist on a large scale without protection from the police. Still, though he had set in motion several investigations of illegal bookmaking, nothing had ever come of them. The former Mayor's reputation was badly damaged when his lieutenant and bosom friend through his long career in public office, James J. Moran, whom Mr. O'Dwyer had appointed Water Commis-

sioner (at \$15,000 a year) before leaving City Hall, was convicted of perjury. He was trapped on the testimony of a fireman-receptionist who revealed that Louis Weber, notorious racketeer, paid regular visits to Mr. Moran's office when he was Deputy Fire Commissioner. Not only was Mr. Moran jailed but his name has been closely associated with other graft in later investigations. One witness, moreover, testified that he had personally paid both Mr. Moran and Mr. O'Dwyer large sums of money.

In the New York *World-Telegram and Sun* for July 30 Edward J. Mowery reported a Government spokesman as estimating the over-all take of the international narcotics combine at \$15 million. Federal agents unearthed \$100,050 in counterfeit money used to finance such operations.

The next day four former New York City firemen were sentenced in a \$2-million shakedown racket, "masterminded by James J. Moran."

CONCLUSIONS

Whatever one may think of the televising of the Kefauver hearings, whatever danger may lie in the utterly uninhibited type of questioning allowed to a congressional investigating committee, no one can deny that the hearings and the exhaustive sleuthing which preceded them have exposed dire threats to our form of government. These threats exist everywhere. The cases cited are merely examples. It is hard to see how we can ever eliminate them. But unless we mitigate them, gangsters and racketeers can get control of our cities and counties. The worst danger is this: that the police and their superiors become so leagued with criminals that they lose interest in enforcing, not only anti-gambling laws, but all laws. Once the police get interested in being paid for protecting law-breakers instead of protecting citizens from law-breakers, where will this reversal of orderly government end? A police system in league with criminals is a formidable threat to the safety of any community.

Moreover, this alliance cannot stop with gambling. It starts with gambling, but ends with dope-peddling, even among the young, with prostitution, violence and murder. Vice is vicious. Once the police, and their superiors, get caught in its coils, they cannot put limits to what they will protect. They are partners in crime with racketeers and thugs and murderers. If they try to draw the line between what they will protect and what they will not, their partners can turn state's evidence and put the police in prison. Yet such corruption of law-enforcement officials seems inevitable wherever such a seemingly "innocent" pastime as gambling is made a crime. The only ultimate solution seems to be for citizens to refuse to gamble, on the ground that it starts a chain-reaction leading to the undermining of American society. Legalizing some forms of gambling may help, but gambling must be regulated, and wherever it is regulated it offers temptations which seem to be too strong for law-enforcement officers to resist.

Catholic schools in British Columbia

Donald J. Pierce

ALL THOSE WHO SEEK to promote the educational rights of Catholics should follow the current school dispute at Maillardville, British Columbia, Canada. According to Section 93 of the British North America Act, 1867, which is Canada's Constitution, each Canadian Province has the right, subject to certain limitations which do not yet apply in British Columbia, to control education within its boundaries. Since the Provinces of Canada have no constitutions apart from the British North America Act, each is free at all times to pass legislation providing public support for denominational schools. Some have done so. Others have not. Among the latter is British Columbia. There, education is controlled by the British Columbia Public Schools Act. Under Section 157 (3), (4) of this Act, private or parochial schools have been tolerated, but receive no public support. Furthermore, Section 155 (1) forbids all religious instruction in the public schools, except the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the reading of an officially selected passage of scripture once a day. Section 156 denies to all clergymen the right to teach in or to be trustees, inspectors or superintendents of public schools. The Act requires (157 (1)) all children enrolled in the state schools to attend school during the regular school hours every school day. Section 157 (2) subjects the parents to the possibility of a maximum fine of ten dollars for each day a child is absent. It is these provisions of the Public Schools Act of the Province which now threaten to produce a crisis in Catholic education in British Columbia.

The Maillardville story goes back to the beginning of last April, when the local Catholic educational authorities closed two parochial schools and had the pupils, numbering about 670, enroll in the public system. The signal for this action was the refusal of the Provincial authorities to provide aid, other than textbook rental facilities, for Catholic schools. Bus transportation, already provided for the public schools, was the most irritating omission. More fundamental than any of these "free" service issues was the question whether Catholics should continue to pay for the upkeep of two school systems, public and parochial. That this is a basic issue is indicated by the public statements of various leading Catholics, especially that of Most Rev. William M. Duke, Archbishop of Vancouver. Said Archbishop Duke:

To put a double tax on the workingman and his little family, especially in these days of the high cost of living, is manifestly unjust.

Our Catholic workingmen and their families feel they cannot support the double school tax any longer.

Donald Pierce, a native Canadian, is a graduate of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. He teaches history at Riverdale Collegiate, Toronto. For some fourteen years he has made a special study of the rights of parents in regard to their children's education. Mr. Pierce contributed the chapter on Canadian education to the America Press booklet *The Right to Educate*. His last AMERICA article, "Parents' rights in public education," appeared March 31.

With good will, a *modus vivendi* . . . can be found if the provincial department of education will but listen to reason.

The new and vital cause of dispute that has arisen at Maillardville since the closing of the two parochial schools is the removal of the Catholic pupils from the public schools one day a week for religious instruction. According to the Public Schools Act (157 (4)) the board of school trustees of the public-school district involved may prosecute the parents of the children. Official warning has been given that this will be done unless the children attend school regularly. The local Catholic school representatives have announced their determination to defend the parents' actions in the courts, if necessary.

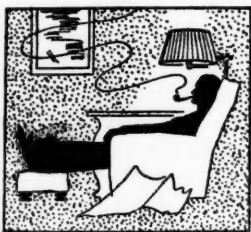
The position taken up by the Catholic leaders in the Maillardville dispute is as follows. The burden of supporting two school systems is grievous. More tolerable, all things considered, would be the enrolment of Catholic pupils in public schools, provided they are removed at regular intervals for religious instruction. The latter method offers the double advantage of taking care of the children's religious welfare while achieving public support for their education.

The Catholics of British Columbia as a whole can lose little but may gain much through the Maillardville incident. At the worst, the parents involved will be compelled to pay a fine. In order to escape ruinous charges they may be forced either to send their children to the public schools regularly or to reopen their parochial schools. But there is a strong possibility that the Provincial government may make valuable concessions which would apply to all Catholics living in British Columbia. It is not unconstitutional for the Province to provide complete public support for parochial schools. The Constitution of Canada allows that. The two largest and richest Provinces, Ontario and Quebec, have always maintained denominational schools with public money. In Quebec the Protestant schools, to the declared satisfaction of their adherents, are completely supported by public taxes. British Columbia, in providing government support for parochial schools, would merely be following an established and time-honored Canadian custom. To adopt such a solution it would not be necessary even to hold an election. The government in power could pass the required legislation immediately. Since British Columbia has a coalition government, no group need make the question one of party politics.

Whatever the outcome of the Maillardville dispute may be, however, it is plain that the Catholics of

British Columbia are not rashly taking up a clearly untenable position. They are sacrificing two schools, though perhaps only temporarily. In withdrawing the children from the public schools for religious instruction, they are challenging a law but not necessarily becoming involved in criminal charges. Prosecution for such withdrawal is permissive, not obligatory. If the public school authorities choose not to prosecute, the withdrawals can continue without penalties. Should prosecution ensue, the courts *may* decide not to convict. If a conviction were secured, appeals could be made to higher courts in the Province, and, finally, to the Dominion courts. Such a delaying action would emphasize Canada's constitutional and traditional support of denominational schools. Even in nonsectarian Canadian circles there has been evident in recent years a reaction against the divorce of religion from public education. The Maillardville Catholics are risking a little in order either to induce the public-school authorities to allow religion to be taught during school hours or to persuade the Provincial government to help support parochial schools. There is a reasonably good chance that they will gain some worth-while concession for both themselves and their co-religionists throughout the Province. Under the circumstances, the course of action they have adopted seems, from a moral standpoint, to be entirely justifiable.

FEATURE "X"



Fr. Donlon is a Midwestern Jesuit who is lending a hand on the editorial staff of AMERICA during the summer. Having paid his respects to the Statue of Liberty, he here offers a few thoughts engendered by the occasion.

"WELL, WELL," said the Editor's cat as she pulled her tail out of my path. "Fancy meeting you here."

"I need not mention that you too have a hungry look in your eye," said I, opening the icebox door. "I would give you a spot of cream, believe me, if it weren't that the Editor says that you are already badly overweight, and that is not good at your age."

"Dear, dear," replied the cat, "how distressingly literal you summertime assistants are. Are all Midwesterners equally wooden? Besides, I don't believe that watermelon is going to do anything for your waistline."

"Don't be catty. It has been a rather special day; and I am minded to celebrate it with this—well, rather generous slab of watermelon. I saw the Statue of Liberty for the first time this afternoon—if you are interested."

"O, you did. At least you had no difficulty in recognizing her, I hope."

"Well, she was a little greener than I had pictured her, and your Manhattan skyline rather dwarfs her. But she did set me to reflecting on the subject of liberty."

"Come, come," she broke in with feline asperity, "isn't it a rather sticky night for a discussion of so heavy a subject? You will notice that my whiskers are already hanging limp."

"Perhaps on second thought," I answered, "a bit of cream would sweeten your disposition, Editor or no Editor. But, to return to the subject, I wondered whether she is not very much a lady in need of a light."

"Good gracious," replied the cat looking up from her saucer, "this is not at all the season for puns, *not at all*."

"I beg your pardon. I was not intending a pun. Besides, when she landed here, ladies did not ask for a light in your sense, at least not in public. What I meant to convey was the idea that liberty is something that requires direction, and it does not supply its own. If Liberty is to be a wise virgin, she very much needs oil in her lamp. The more desirable the maiden, the greater the pity if she wanders aimless through the haunts of men."

"Maybe it's the humidity; but I do confess that this is a bit deep for me."

"I'm sorry, but you appear so sagacious a creature that I forgot that life is much simpler for you cats. The problem of liberty does not arise in your life. Nature has provided you with automatic controls. But we humans are left in great measure in our own hands, and from the same source from which flows our liberty comes our responsibility. So much so that he who will be irresponsibly free is but a libertine. It is not that our lives are aimless, while yours are aimed; but the aiming of our lives is not done altogether for us. We have a part in the sighting of every shaft of deliberate desire."

"The cream was very good; and I do feel in a more philosophic mood. But still I do not see the point about needing a light. Isn't Liberty dispensing light, as she stands there in the Upper Bay?"

"I rather imagine that that is what the artist intended to convey. But the thought that occurred to me was that freedom from compulsion, from despotic power, from external duress is not of itself something light-giving, but something that calls for light. And it seemed to me this afternoon that while Liberty holds her torch aloft to cast her light as far as possible, she holds it as close as she can towards Him Who gives light. Liberty that will not find in Him the design and pattern of human life will prove but a stumbling virgin."

"Those of us who are most dedicated to liberty must be of all the most dedicated to Him who radiates from His nature into ours the intelligence according to which we freely move. If we citizens of the United States pride ourselves more than all others on our civil and political liberties, then we more than all others must have a deep and wide understanding of the nature and destiny of man, his rights and his corresponding obligations. And we shall not have such an understanding if we fail to recognize God. For He made us creatures

with rights and liberties precisely that we might become, in and through all the forms of human life, more and more like unto Him."

"You mean, I take it," said my companion turning suspiciously towards a rustle that came from a pile of rejected manuscripts, "that the freer men are to determine their own course politically, economically, socially, the more they stand to lose if they determine a wrong course."

"I think," I said, "that you have gotten half my idea, and you will get the other half when you stop wondering whether there is a mouse in the corner. The part of my thought you didn't get is that men are prone to de-

termine a wrong course and suffer great losses once they have relegated God to a place among the nonessentials, the 'electives' of life. And I sometimes fear that in the emotional strain arising from misunderstanding and clashes among religious groups, we tend to think of religion only as a constant headache in the body politic and not as something basic to public order and the common good. God is not a privilege of the individual; He is a necessity of the community."

"You may have something there, but it is too far beyond my bedtime for me to get my claws into it. Thank heaven, life is much less formidable for us cats."

STEPHEN E. DONLON

Modern literature: darkness at dawn

Michael F. Moloney

An English critic has recently commented upon the widespread weariness and disillusionment which afflict modern literature:

Fear of the future, fatigue, the habit of introspection, loss of faith: all these have worked against the ardor of youth and the serenity of age in favor of a slightly soured middle state. Yet what seems to have affected writers most of all is the disappearance of subjects to write about.

The novelists, he declares, have suffered most. He has a clear insight into the reason why this is true:

One cannot imagine novels like *Tom Jones*, or *The Scarlet Letter*, or *Middlemarch* ever getting written unless a number of basic assumptions about human nature and society were generally accepted . . . the great novelists of the past have always known just where they stood. Now, however, no novelist knows exactly where he stands. And so his chances of conveying any clear notion of a world which is itself in motion are small indeed. Most of the time he will be too busy focusing.

Because it would be difficult to disagree with these observations, it may be permissible to attempt a further analysis of the reasons why modern literature has reached this dead-end and to suggest the cautious hope that there are signs of emergence.

We are accustomed now to the historical theory that the age in which we live is the fag-end of the Renaissance, that an epoch which began in Europe in the middle of the fifteenth or the early sixteenth century is drawing to a close under the doubtful impact of atomic promise or atomic disaster. If this view be tenable—and there are few who doubt it—then the explanation for our literary confusion and ennui must be sought in the historic processes which have shaped our deteriorating age.

It is a profound cultural irony, but a not surprising one, that the post-Renaissance epoch which began by

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denying God is ending by rejecting man. The rejection of God, it might be argued rather convincingly, was the first and central achievement of the Renaissance. Aside from the writers of high-school texts and the professional propounders of bigotry (both groups are larger than they should be), there are not many persons nowadays who view the Renaissance as an intellectual upsurge inspired by the smiting of popish tyranny and the dissolution of medieval superstition. Too much is now known of the intellectual history of the Middle Ages for the views of the Coultons to prevail. The Carolingian renaissance of the ninth century, the even more far-flung and significant renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth—these lay behind and provided the foundation for that final Renaissance which swept Europe from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries and which still colors every aspect of our lives and thought. The difference between the last movement and its predecessors was not in kind—each was a period of intellectual ferment—or in quality, but in direction. Who would say that Shakespeare and Descartes and Newton were greater than Dante and Aquinas and Roger Bacon? His ". . . desire to separate religious truth and scientific," says Basil Willey of Francis Bacon, in many ways a typical Renaissance man, "was in the interest of science, not of religion. He worked to keep science pure from religion; the opposite part of the process—keeping religion pure from science—did not interest him nearly so much."

Very likely too much has been made of Francis Bacon in the history of modern thought, but at least he is a convenient seventeenth-century symbol of the direction Western civilization was to take. Despite his pious moralizing, despite his frequent expression of

religious sentiments, Bacon is a great divider, not in the Mephistophelean sense of one *der stets verneint*, but in the subtler sense of one who unceasingly affirms the primacy of the secondary, of the temporal over the spiritual. The data of the senses and the scientific method—these were his “Open sesame” to the new world and the new world view. Man, he thought and said, had had quite enough of metaphysics.

Three centuries and a half of devotion to the Baconian principles have brought an inevitable fruition. The rejection of metaphysics meant the denial or debasement of religion. Tragically, at the same historical moment that the Catholic unity of the West was shattered and the sects with their bizarre or fragmentary teachings succeeded in blurring the simple but precise relationship of God and man which was the great accomplishment of the Middle Ages, the ancient Ptolemaic astronomy gave way to the Copernican. The earth, from being the center of the universe became only a minor planet revolving around one of innumerable suns.

Theological perturbation and cosmological confusion point logically in the direction of loneliness and despair. But here a strange reversal occurred. Simultaneously with the diminution of his stature in the universe, man, by a strange machination of spiritual pride, began the process of self-deification. This latter process was launched in the seventeenth century (Whitehead's “century of genius”) with the initial achievements of modern physical and chemical science. Faith in the Christian God as the Creator and Preserver of the universe was receding, but faith in man, the master and interpreter of nature's mysteries, was on the rise.

Inextricably bound up with the God-man antinomy were a number of others. If the testimony of the senses and the scientific method were to be the ultimate criteria of truth, the exaltation of the external at the expense of the internal, of matter at the expense of spirit, of science to the detriment of poetry were inevitable. The great literary masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ariosto and Tasso, Ronsard and Spenser, Cervantes and Shakespeare, escape for the most part the effect of this divisiveness because they were the heirs of medieval culture and were shaped by it. But are not the defects, at least, of eighteenth-century neo-classicism the result of the glorification of form, externally conceived, to the exclusion of the profounder searchings of the spirit? And does not nineteenth-century poetry, at least in England and France, offer vast stretches of the prosaic (Wordsworth, Shelley) or of the sentimentally inflated (Wordsworth, Hugo, Tennyson) which indicate either submission to, or a too conscious flight from, a science that was desiccating their world.

The early twentieth century saw the climax and the crash of the doctrine of human self-sufficiency. The vast and empty cathedral erected to the worship of man, with its side chapels devoted to the cults of scientism, materialism and externality, came tumbling down in 1914. Like Hitler's thousand-year *Reich*, its

stability had been illusory. And like Hitler's *Reich*, its passing left chaos in its wake. The majority of contemporary literary men have, to continue the metaphor, wandered dazedly amid the rubble, fixing upon a beam here or a concatenation of mortar there as still possessing value. Some (any reader of the modern novel can name them) despairingly or blasphemously slunk off to the jungle.

The major figures have sought, in one way or another, to escape the disabilities of their fellows. Thomas Mann has attempted to give depth to his interpretation of human life by turning to allegory, but the third dimension of Mann's novels is an illusion. “Allegory,” C. S. Lewis once wisely wrote, “is the subjectivism of an objective age.” But with Mann it is not really subjectivism at all, but only stage machinery—a myth without a faith. Proust turned inward but with paradoxical results. His is an inwardness of the senses only, and the stifling atmosphere of his novels is the consequence of their spiritual aridity. To say this is not to question the validity, within limits, of Proust's art. He succeeded as no one else, in arresting a final stage in the decadence of European civilization. However, he is at the same time the captive of his age, which he failed to transcend as the greatest writers in all ages must do.

The inevitable T. S. Eliot, facing the problem of the “dissociation of sensibility” thirty years ago, advised that it is not enough “. . . to look in our hearts and write . . . that is not looking deep enough; Racine or Donne looked into a good deal more than the heart. One must look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system and the digestive tract.” Alas, even the words of the elect have a tendency, after a due lapse of time, to rise up in accusation. Mr. Eliot, as close followers of his career are aware, has done a rather strenuous job over the years of keeping on many sides of many questions. But the admonition to look into the nervous system and the digestive tract for literary inspiration does not now, at least, seem to have been a prophetic utterance. It impresses rather as a clever voicing of the spirit of the 1920's. At any rate Celia Coplestone (in Eliot's *The Cocktail Party*) was looking elsewhere when she said:

For what happened is remembered like a dream
In which one is exalted by intensity of loving
In the spirit, a vibration of delight
Without desire, for desire is fulfilled
In the delight of loving. A state one does not know
When awake. But what, or whom I loved,
Or what in me was loving, I do not know.

Perhaps here, too, Mr. Eliot, through Celia, is only voicing a widespread inarticulate hunger. At any rate the fantastic popularity of the play, when all deductions have been made for snobbishness, social, intellectual and devotional, and for the influence of the coteries from 42nd Street to Laredo, seems to indicate an environmental transformation. Perhaps, paradoxically, the achievement of the Baconian vision is bringing a decisive reversal of the Baconian values. Perhaps the very bleakness of the scientific prospect, the very

barrenness of the man made God may bring our age to the feet of the God made man. The hopelessness, in an age of violence, of humility may flower, as so often in the past, in the humility of hope.

Should such a change in our spiritual milieu be in the making, the uncertainty of subject-matter and of vantage point which our English critic notes will be at

an end. But Catholic readers would do well to beware of false hopes. Neither facile reconciliations nor pietistic rejections will be the touchstones of the new literary age. In the somber morning there will be no dearth of somber shadows. Yet the hills and valleys will be touched with splendor and the outlines of the storm-clouds will be dark with excessive light.

Penetrating the phenomenon

TOTAL EMPIRE

By Edmund A. Walsh. Bruce. 293p. \$3.50

Total Empire is a "total" approach to communism, treating it philosophically, historically, politically and sociologically, investigating its past and present and trying to penetrate into its future. The term "empire" is used very appropriately since, in our day, communism is no longer a purely Russian phenomenon, but the backbone of an empire built around Russia.

Fr. Walsh discusses Roosevelt's policies toward communism, avoiding both unwarranted admiration and undeserved denigration. He discusses the mentality of those American intellectuals who are converted to communism. "The urge to be different" seems to explain quite a few of such cases. He asks the question whether, in the case of imminent aggression, there are religious, moral or utilitarian inhibitions against using the atomic bomb without waiting for the first blow. His answer is that there are none. This, obviously, is not tantamount to advocating preventive war.

While the analysis is in general sound and penetrating, though perhaps not perfectly arranged, the present reviewer believes that Fr. Walsh's approach to the roots of Soviet aggressiveness is inadequate. He recognizes, indeed, that 200 million Russians are not the enemy. The men in the Kremlin are the enemy. Nevertheless, he is inclined to explain the Kremlin's aggressiveness by the national character of the Russians and as a revival of Tsarist expansionism. Apropos of the national character, he quotes, and obviously approves, Kipling's famous statement that Russia must be considered not as the most easterly nation of the West, but as the most westerly nation of the East. Kipling, however, was a British ultra-nationalist in love with British rule in India and afraid of seeing British imperialism superseded by Russian imperialism. Now that all the archives are open, it is known that, except for the lunatic on the imperial throne who was Paul I, the Russians never contemplated the conquest of India.

As to Tsarist expansionism, the creation of a vast empire around the originally insignificant Duchy of Moscow

was a combination of three processes, each of which is conspicuous in the history of other great nations. First, unification of a nation divided among many principalities, after the manner of the unification of France and the later and much more painful unifications of Germany and of Italy. Second, occupation of free space contiguous to the original habitat; it was thus that the United States expanded toward the Pacific. Third, the formation of a colonial empire like those formed by Spain, Portugal, Holland, France and England, with the difference that the Russian Empire was not separated by water from the metropolitan area.

Soviet imperialism, of course, is quite different in nature and method from these historical imperialisms. It could be best compared with the expansion of the Arab state, a comparison which, incidentally, Fr. Walsh makes.

The author is absolutely right, however, when, speaking of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by Lenin, he epitomizes that action as having set back the clock of civil and religious liberty far behind the point reached by Alexander II in 1861.

N. S. TIMASHEFF

Questing hearts

CALL FOR A MIRACLE

By Benedict Kiely. Dutton. 252p. \$3

Benedict Kiely is a young Irish writer whose prose is already familiar to readers of AMERICA. Every six weeks or so his "Dublin Letter" appears in these pages. *Call For A Miracle* is his second novel and it, too, is all about Dublin, a city which has stimulated some of the finest creative writing the world has seen since the unhappy sons of Atreus sacked Priam's city. But Dublin, like Troy, has had its Homer, and no one—not even an ad-man—would think of comparing the talents of Mr. Kiely with those of James Joyce. It is clear, too, that Mr. Kiely himself would never dream of making the comparison, for he has written a novel that is entirely unpretentious, that has a character and charm of its own and that is, from first page to last, eminently readable.

Irish writing, like Irish talk, is a good thing when it is under control. Happily, Mr. Kiely is nearly always in control. But the important thing in his work is not structure, of which one is

BOOKS

little conscious, but style, which in an Irish writer may seldom be ignored. Perhaps the most touching quality of that style—difficult always to define—is an under-rhythm of poetry, an elegiac current flowing just beneath the surface of narrative, which every now and again breaks through the surface in a burst of sparkling lyricism. This is something different altogether from so-called "poetic prose." It is spontaneous, uncalculated, authentic. It is a quality of theme and temperament which one seems naturally to associate with the Irish, as Chesterton memorably does in his *Ballad of the White Horse*:

The wild Gaels of Ireland
Are the men that God made mad,
For all their wars are merry
And all their songs are sad.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Mr. Kiely finds his theme in that inexhaustible source, the loneliness of the human heart. It is this loneliness—whether found in the disillusion of a Dublin newspaper man, or in the suffering of a young paralytic or in the bitterness of a strange girl's heart—which "calls for a miracle." Sometimes, of course, the heart calls out and there is no miracle—except that of faith. But even this may be misunderstood or rejected. To misunderstand is amusing at times and often pathetic; to reject is always tragic. The seeds of humor and pathos and tragedy are in all of Mr. Kiely's characters, as they are in all of us, and through his novel we see them ripen and grow into the awful, frightening, lovable things that human beings do turn into. This, too, is a miracle of sorts, and it is Mr. Kiely who works it. KEVIN SULLIVAN

A challenge for Christians

THE CHRISTIAN IN POLITICS

By Jerry Voorhis. Association Press. 136p. \$1.75

The author sets out to steer a course between the Fascist "appeal to force to put the 'best people' into power, under the false mantle of a defense of Christian civilization," and the op-

posite extreme where "church meetings held in the name of religion attempt to justify the course pursued by Soviet Russia." But that middle course is not one of mere abstractions or perfectionism; it is a hard, functioning Christianity, reconciling the demands of its moral ideals with "the basic fact about democratic political action, the fact that no one can have entirely his own way about anything." Thus the book is for the Christian purist, as well as for those politicians whom he castigates.

Jerry Voorhis' political record is well known; experience backs up his words. Now he urges others to go and do likewise. Three of his chapter titles are especially significant: "Are There Christian Political Issues?" "Shall I Run for Political Office?" and "What Does It Take to Win Elections?" He pleads for what the Catholic calls "social action," non-politically operative through individuals and free associations, which is supported by his experience with cooperatives and credit unions. But he also urges the layman to enter the political arena; not to do so is too often a manifestation of snobbery and hypocrisy and cannot always be excused as "indifference."

This little book not only discloses the Christian principles and sound social philosophy which guide those in politics; it also does a harder task. It shows that religious principles and good ideas are not enough, if one does not put them to work, even though the going is often rough and at times downright ugly.

CARL F. TAEUSCH

THE WATCH

By Carlo Levi. Farrar, Strauss and Young. 442p. \$3.75

Can an author write a satisfying novel, using as his primary source of interest an intellectual thesis or a sociological observation, and relegating to a secondary role the characterization and action one expects in a work of fiction? When Carlo Levi—Italian journalist, painter, physician and political figure—wrote the engrossing and powerful story of his anti-Fascist exile in *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, the answer seemed to be yes. Certainly that was an exciting and entertaining book, as well as an important one. Yet almost its entire value sprang from the passionate expression of an idea: the Socialist's bitter rebellion against oppression of the peasants by the landowners and feudal industrialists of Mussolini's Italy. Levi has now essayed a second novel in which people and events are rigidly subordinated to the idea he wants to put across; but this time it fails utterly

of realization as art or as entertainment.

The theme in the present book is the division of people into those who are creative, alive and close to nature, on the one hand, and, on the other, those whose lives are shrouded in words, who put symbols and artificialities between themselves and the real world. Because this is a more abstract concept than that embodied in the author's earlier book, it does not so easily lend itself to dramatic treatment; it is less susceptible to passionate advocacy. It is perhaps this lack of passion that explains the weakness of *The Watch*.

The story is laid in Rome in 1946 when the De Gasperi Government replaced the Liberation cabinets. Its time span covers three days of political stress in which every aspect of the city's life is seen through the author's experiences. Reputedly an excellent painter, Mr. Levi has attempted to tell his story by applying the logic of the canvas to the written word in the form of a series of "stills" which present in almost unrelated episodes the slums, black markets, highway brigands, a newspaper office, political conferences and shoddy love. It is a technique of the most difficult type, and its use here does not seem justified by the results, for the main consequence is that there is very little development to the book. Some of the sketches are interesting in themselves, but sustained action is missing and is missed.

The heat of the author's emotion and the personification of his ideas in forceful characters made *Eboli* a distinguished novel. The lack of these qualities in *The Watch* and the peculiar form of the story produce a considerable disappointment in the latter book. The theme is one worthy of thoughtful consideration, but perhaps fiction was not the best possible approach.

M. D. REAGAN

THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

By J. D. Salinger. Little, Brown & Co. 277p. \$3

A novel should have substance, should be coherent, should contain vivid characterization; and it is the better for a well-constructed plot. This extended short story has none of these important attributes. In a word, it is not a novel. It is a story which becomes frightfully boring before one is halfway through the book. The story, or what there is of a story, could easily have been told in 5,000 words or less, and told more effectively.

The book is peppered with four-letter words. It purports to tell the story of Holden Caulfield, who leaves (by request) a semi-private school and returns to the caverns of New York for a three-day binge. His encounters with

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the problems of living are told in a flip (and sometimes ferocious) manner which is not in the best of taste. Good writers have given us the smells and tastes of the prize ring without benefit of four-letter words. Mr. Salinger would have written a much more enjoyable book if he had left them where they are usually found—on the walls of latrines where “little boys” write them.

Perhaps the best thing to be said about *The Catcher in the Rye* is that Mr. Salinger would do well to remain in the field of the short story.

THOMAS FRANCIS RITT

INDIA AFIRE

By Clare and Harris Wofford, Jr. Day. 344p. \$4

In 1949, during the six hottest months of India's protracted summer, two young Americans moved rapidly through the multi-lingual Republics of India and Pakistan, asking questions in the English language. Surprisingly, the result of such a “stunt”—if that is the right word—is a very useful book for an understanding of India (and Pakistan). For the Woffords are no mere tourists in a hurry. They are trained observers, sympathetic, blest with much understanding, though not faultless.

Mahatma Gandhi, of course, they arrived too late to see, but they saw and heard much of him and his continuing good work in his *Seva-Gram* (Service-Village). They retell his beautiful life in three splendid chapters.

An interesting chapter goes to Netaji (Illustrious Leader) or Subhas Chandra Bose, the late revolutionary leader of Bengal. How strange it is that one and the same India had at the same time two such different sons and popular heroes as the utterly non-violent Gandhiji and the utterly violent Netaji!

Nehru, the “Hamlet” of India, also receives his chapter, an admiring one for the man himself, a disappointed one for his unwillingness to effect sweeping reforms to overcome India's poverty and to check the ever-mounting flame of popular discontent. The Woffords see no hope for India save a non-violent, non-Marxist socialism which is Gandhian in inspiration and—though they show no acquaintance with the word—resembles the distributism of Chesterton-Belloc. This remedy Nehru is not applying (save in the measure of “too little and too late”). The Indian Socialists are making promises that they will apply it in full measure. The Indian Communists are violently perverting it—and are being violently repressed by Nehru, who is

merely repressing where he should be reforming. Such, in a sentence, is the Wofford judgment on India (and, in a measure, Pakistan, too).

Mr. and Mrs. Wofford do not feel happy over their judgment. Although it urges them to pray, they do so with little hope for the one-fifth of humankind who dwell in the subcontinent. Hence *India Afire* ends on a note of despair. Both Indians and Pakistani must use modern means of birth control, or their social and economic ills will never be cured, and the Communists will take over and move on to conquer the Arab bloc, Africa, Western Europe and the Americas! So ends in hopelessness a hopeful study of a fifth of the human race by two young, energetic, earnest, sincere and capable Americans. Seeing too much too quickly in India and Pakistan when the temperature is over a hundred degrees Fahrenheit is dangerous!

DAYAKISHOR

LIFEMANSHIP

By Stephen Potter. Holt. 120p. \$2.50

Mr. Potter will be remembered as the author of *Gamesmanship*, or the art of winning games without actually cheating. The present work adds further notes and researches on how to upset one's golf opponent and dominate Christmas games by means of assorted props and ploys, but it is chiefly a handbook for the social faker. Lifemen, or students of successful living without manners, money, culture or charm, are provided with enough gambits to make them even more obnoxious than their superiors. The disciplines range over such vital areas as Conversationship, Woomanship, Week-endmanship and Writership.

Phrased in an elaborate jargon worthy of a duller scholarship, the book sets up and solves its problems in crude conduct in a shifting spirit of satire, eccentric humor and, once in a while, plain silliness. Taking off from a sentimental dedication to “Anon,” the author plunges into a scattering of respectable hypocrisies. Parlor psychologists, sententious tourists, week-end religionists and atmospheric authors are outwitted at their own little games. There are hints for bounders who consider courtship a diversion, and even a short course in the impressive handling of the telephone for non-entities who wish to be taken for tycoons.

There are moments of malicious fun in this study of lifeplay, along with distressing signs, especially for *Gamesmanship* readers, that the author's special vein of comedy is nearing exhaustion. That brings to mind faintly acid comments on Reviewership. Mr.



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Potter indicates that unfavorable reviews always include faint praise, such as, "The illustrations, of course, are excellent." It happens that Frank Wilson's "explanatory diagrams and anatomical studies" are themselves gems of satire and completely distracting.

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

MICHAEL F. MOLONEY is in the English department at Marquette University.

N. S. TIMASHEFF has taught in the universities of St. Petersburg, Prague, at the Sorbonne and Harvard, is Professor of Political Philosophy at Fordham.

CARL F. TAEUSCH is in the Political Science department at St. Louis University.

THOMAS F. RITT is an Associate Editor of A.D.

THE WORD

And when He saw them He said: "Go, show yourselves to the priests" (Luke 17:14, XIII Sunday after Pentecost).

When Christ cured bodily afflictions He showed that diseases of the soul were His prime concern. On one occasion, for instance, when He was healing a paralytic, He said: "That you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house." Sin blinds and paralyzes. Sin cripples the spiritual powers of man. Sin is unclean like leprosy (as that disease was then regarded), bringing with it a sense of shame and often rendering the victim a social outcast.

As Jesus was passing along the borders of Galilee and Samaria, ten lepers, nine of them Jews and one a Samaritan, stood afar off and cried aloud: "Jesus, Master, have pity on us." Then it was that He sent them to the priests in Jerusalem. The priests didn't want to see their leprosy sores. Like everyone else, they would have kept the lepers at a distance. But the Law of Moses required them to inspect and certify lepers who had been cured. So Jesus sent the lepers to the priests with an implied promise that they would be cured on the way. They were.

The nine Jews went on to Jerusalem to show themselves to the priests and obtain their certificate of cure. The Samaritan came back to show himself to the High Priest, Jesus Christ, who had wrought the cure. Our Lord expressed His sorrow that it was left to an outsider to give fitting praise and thanksgiving to God.

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do we sufficiently thank our Lord for the great gift of spiritual healing that He has left us in the sacrament of penance? To us He says: "Go, show yourself to the priest!" The priests of the Old Law could only certify a cure. Christ, the Good Physician and High Priest of the New Testament, has shared His healing powers with His priests. When He said to them: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained," He implicitly told His disciples: "Go, show yourselves to the priests." Sins can be forgiven only when the sinner shows himself truly sorry for his sins. The initial test of such sorrow, much harder for some than for others, is the willingness to accuse oneself of one's sins in confession. But this is by no means enough to show true sorrow.

The real test is readiness to give up the proximate occasions of sin, and to submit to the judgment of the confessor as to whether the occasion is proximate. A man is not truly sorry for his sins unless he is willing to give up not only (in a general way) the sin itself, but the concrete situation which leads him to sin.

Similarly, where one has sinfully damaged another, in goods or reputation, true sorrow requires an honest effort to make good the damage. Here, again, the penitent shows his sorrow by his readiness to submit to the judgment of his confessor as to how this should be done.

The priest himself acts as a physician as well as a judge of souls in the confessional, in accordance with the institution of the sacrament of penance by the Divine Physician, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Sixteen centuries ago St. Aphraates, called "the Persian Sage," beautifully described this role of the priest:

For all ills there are remedies, and when a skillful physician has discovered them they are healed. Those who are wounded in our conflict have penance as their remedy . . . O doctors, taught by our wise Physician, take up that medicine with which you can cure the wounds of the sick.

The physician-confessor, as St. Aphraates says, will not "refuse healing to those who are in need of being cured." At the same time, this "medicine of penance," like many effective medicines, may itself hurt. It may hurt our pride; it may wound our sensual inclinations and habits of indulgence. The sting of the "remedy of penance" only proves that it has been applied to the source of infection. All this is involved in Our Lord's salutary prescription: "Go, show yourselves to the priests."

JOHN J. SCANLON, S.J.

THEATRE

SPICED HAM. Theatre critics use the word "ham" as a term of disparagement. The term usually refers to an actor who, his vanity exceeding his histrionic ability, interprets a character with exaggerated mannerisms, or steals scenes from other performers by engaging in unnecessary "business" while they are reading their lines.

The devices some hams employ to distract the attention of the audience from another actor are amazing in their variety. A ham may divert attention to himself by a lift of an eyebrow that is not warranted by the script, or a puff on a cigarette the director would have forbidden if he could have imagined all the devious processes of a ham's mind. It really doesn't matter how minute a director's instructions are, or what he forbids a ham to do. He will always find a way to distract attention from other performers to himself.

In a way, the ham resembles the super-smart lunatics in psychological thrillers like *The Closing Door* and *The Man*. When one of those madmen springs the trap on his victim, it is impossible to escape. Try to lock a manic-depressive out of the house and you will find yourself locked in with him. You appeal to the man who reads the gas meter, but he cannot be bothered. When the policeman on the beat comes to investigate, the lunatic's story is more plausible than yours, and you are advised to take a cup of coffee and get a hold of yourself. Lunatics and hams practically always win.

While hamming is a generally reprehensible practice, the bane of directors and the scourge of honest actors, there is a legitimate place for it in some types of productions. In many instances it serves the function of garlic in cookery or the onion in a martini. While conspicuous hamming would ruin *The Bluebird* or *Cyrano de Bergerac* or *Candida*, it actually helps to make a revival like *The Relapse* plausible. Even some contemporary comedies, especially musicals, are often improved by the insertion of a slice of ham in one or more scenes.

There was, for instance, the hilarious hamming of Carmen Matthews in the recent musical comedy *Courtin' Time*. Miss Matthews was cast in the role of a prissy old maid who received what was probably the only proposal of marriage in her life. If the scene had been played straight it would have been merely amusing. But Miss Matthews made an opera of it. She did not offer

an interpretation of the role, she made a parody of it, and instead of responding with smiles and snickers, the audience roared in screams and guffaws.

Judy Holiday, in a City Center revival of *Dream Girl*, gave a performance that contained liberal cuts of ham, with the result that the revival was more humorous than the original production. Miss Holiday did not employ mugging and distracting business to draw attention from her fellow performers to herself. She skillfully applied beautifully timed hamming to her part of the script. The result was a delectable theatrical buffet.

THEOPHILIS LEWIS

FILMS

ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Owing to circumstances which were far from coincidental two versions of Lewis Carroll's nonsense fable have appeared simultaneously, making their bid for the juvenile trade. Since my seven-year-old niece was visiting us, I took her along to both movies to get a little expert advice on how to write them up.

The British version has an impeccably orthodox approach to the subject. In a fairly lengthy prologue employing live actors it introduces some of the real-life counterparts of the characters in the story, including Queen Victoria (Pamela Browne), the Dean of Oxford (Felix Aylmer), the Dean's youngest daughter, Alice (Carol Marsh), and a harassed mathematics instructor named Charles Dodgson (Stephen Murray), who is Lewis Carroll himself.

Having established its proper literary and historical background, the picture proceeds to Alice's adventures, with Miss Marsh continuing as the heroine and the Wonderland creatures being portrayed by life-size stringless puppets whose voices are supplied by the actors in the prologue.

My young companion took a very dim view of the film and, though our reasons may have been different, I can't say that I blamed her. Its treatment of the story was one which at best would have more appeal for grown-ups. What spoiled it even on that level was technical deficiencies. Its Ansco-color photography was inferior, its sound recording—turning the English accents into an almost unintelligible jumble—was worse, and its puppets, though ingenious, were not maneuverable enough to keep Alice's progress through Wonderland from seeming interminably slow.

(*Souvaïne Selective Films*)

Walt Disney, whose opinion of his competition is evident from the fact that he attempted to get a court injunction prohibiting the showing of the other film for an eighteen-month period, has not allowed excessive reverence for literary tradition to inhibit his animated cartoon version of the story. His Mad Hatter speaks with the voice of Ed Wynn, Jerry Colonna is the March Hare, Sterling Holloway the Cheshire Cat and Richard Haydn the Caterpillar. The characters are a great deal madder than Lewis Carroll imagined them. The incidents, chosen in hit-or-miss fashion from both *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, are strewn with pratfalls and other slapstick devices which were not in the original. The picture is undeniably lively and has moments of delightfully imaginative comedy for both young and old. It also has more than its share of insipid songs, garish color effects and second-rate Disneyisms in general. (RKO)

OLIVER TWIST. After three years, during which various Jewish groups attempted to prevent the film's showing on the ground that its representation of Fagin was anti-Semitic, the British-made screen version of Dickens' grim classic has finally been made available for American audiences. It is probably true that in general no one outside an offended group is equipped to pass judgment on the validity of that group's objection to a particular film. It seemed to this outsider, however, that the movie projects Fagin simply as an individual—sinister and grotesque, perhaps, but understandable and even somewhat sympathetic within the framework of the social abuses which Dickens was exposing. It would take, I should think, a virulently unregenerate anti-Semite, who in any case could find infinitely more satisfactory demonstrations of his twisted thinking, to make anything else of the character.

The movie itself is a stunning job of rendering Dickens in genuine cinematic terms for serious-minded adults. Directed by David Lean (who made *Great Expectations*), it compresses most of the story and all the meaning and purpose of the novel into a normal-length film full of artful transitions which do the work of several thousand words. There are almost soundless sequences of camera story-telling at its best. Alec Guinness as Fagin, Robert Newton as Bill Sykes, Kay Walsh as Nancy and John Howard Davies as Oliver give superb performances. Francis L. Sullivan as Mr. Bumble epitomizes the real villain of the piece—the smug, comfortable citizen who is without charity. (United Artists)

MOIRA WALSH

INDIANA

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CORRESPONDENCE

Catholic graduates in the parish

EDITOR: As a Catholic college graduate, I agree wholeheartedly with practically everything "John Caughlan" says in the July 28 Feature "X" about the failure of Catholic college graduates in the parish.

I would question his assertion, however, that the average Catholic college gives "four years of advanced religion, backed by philosophy." How "advanced" is the religion, and how well is the philosophy taught?

In the Catholic university I attended, the religion classes were inadequate and poorly taught, and were "played down" to the mediocre instead of being "played up" to challenge the intellect and stimulate thought.

I should also like to mention that the talents of the well-prepared Catholic graduate are often wasted in the parish because the pastor ignores or fails to recognize them. Some pastors and sisters want to do everything themselves.

I hope that your provocative article will jolt some of our Catholic college deans into facing the reality of their failure to turn out the well-trained Catholic lay leaders that we need so much.

EUGENE P. PHILIPP

Milwaukee, Wis.

P. S. How many Catholic college graduates read AMERICA?

EDITOR: Are some of our colleges allowing their students to take courses in religion that they are not prepared for?

I know of one returned GI, a Catholic but a graduate of public grade and high schools, who went to a Catholic college on the GI Bill. His faith was strong and his morals were OK, but he said that in the religion classes, "I didn't know what they were talking about half the time."

Could this happen in mathematics, chemistry or physics? Wouldn't the college see to it that students had the proper preparatory courses to enable them to study these subjects.

JOHN T. DEVoy

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EDITOR: From my experience as a union organizer, I am driven to wonder whether Catholic college students really have "their duties as educated Catholic men impressed upon them."

There are quite a number of Catholic graduates in the field in which I am organizing. In fact we helped to place many of them, hoping that they

would show an interest in union affairs. Few of them will take any responsibility. Many act as if unions were un-American and suspect.

Our young Catholic girl graduates are much better than the men. They take an active and intelligent part in union affairs, serving as shop stewards, distributing leaflets, collecting dues, etc.

They have been immeasurably helpful in checking and containing the Communists in their departments.

ORGANIZER

New York, N. Y.

(The great reader-response to John Caughlan's Feature "X" on the apathy of college graduates in parishes has shown that the article touched many nerve-ends. We shall run at least excerpts from as many letters as possible.—ED.)

Thoughts in exile

EDITOR: I have just finished reading for the second time John Rogers' article, "We like it here, but yet—" in AMERICA for July 7. Probably many other native Americans with a love for old places have read this article with similar interest and sympathetic understanding. I suppose many emigrants from lands other than England have that same sense of exile, but lack the ability to put it into words.

If Mr. Rogers had happened to settle in one of the older parts of the United States, I wonder if in his particular case there would have been a little less of that "but yet" feeling?

(Miss) EDITH HUME

Louisville, Ky.

Democracy and equality

EDITOR: I enjoy your magazine very much and get a good deal of interest from it. I am a convert since 1949, with the expressed hope of getting a more true Christian faith in its fullest form of Catholicism.

I want to refer to the article "A decade in race relations" by Roy Wilkins (AM. 6/16). I believe a lot of people don't know the meaning of "democracy" in its fullest form. Nor do they know the real meaning of Christianity. The Declaration of Independence says that "all men are created equal." It does not say about color or creed or race. We should show other countries that under our Constitution "democracy" means equality for all. Why pick on the poor Negroes? They can't help that they are black. Let's

not make them blacker than they are. Who make the slums and ghettos and crime? Do we help to educate them so that they know better?

Christianity? Some people don't seem to know the meaning of the word, nor of the Ten Commandments, but only go to church to see and hear, for show. And that goes for all over the whole world. What are these people going to do when they find Negroes in their heaven? Thomas Merton's *Seven Storey Mountain* talks about Friendship House in Harlem. When he explains about marriages into the colored race, he says they have the same eyes, mouth, nose, heart, mind, hands, feet. They work, play and love the same. No difference.

God made men equal. Christ died on the cross for us all, not only for the whites, but also for the colored. In "Feature X" (AM. 6/16) Richard Thomas, Jesuit priest, said: "The colored have to sit in the back and receive Holy Communion last." What would God say? There are first-class Catholics and second-class Catholics. I am not ashamed to say I don't care who takes Communion with me. I go for the sanctity of God, not for a show.

This is written under a tension, hoping to express myself clearly. I love everybody and don't care who they are.

May God bless you all for the fine work you do. Thanks.

A CONVICT

Eastern State Penitentiary
Philadelphia, Pa.

Sex education and delinquency

EDITOR: Sister Mary Jessine's article (7/14) on the need of wholesome sex education for our children is timely and informative.

I would take exception, however, to her assertion that juvenile delinquency "can almost invariably be traced to poor supervision or faulty training by parents." The causes of juvenile delinquency are much more complex than such a statement indicates. Verification of this may be found in the works of some of the authors cited by Sister Jessine.

That there are delinquent parents is only too true. But there are juvenile delinquents whose parents have conscientiously fulfilled their obligations.

We should not lose sight of influences that are actively undermining the work done in the home—the gang, the sensational press, at times the school, to name but a few.

Catholic parents today must find it increasingly difficult to rear their children in the fear and love of God. They need our aid, our encouragement; they need us to come to their defense.

RICHARD M. PLUNKETT, O.S.A.
Villanova, Pa.